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Teams craft cities from imagination

By **Becky Manley** | The Journal Gazette

Batteries, beads and milk cartons became the stuff that cities are made of during Saturday's Indiana Regional Future City Competition at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne.

The educational program challenged seventh- and eighth-graders to design futuristic cities that use nanotechnology, or tiny technology on an atomic scale, to keep its infrastructure healthy.

Twenty-six teams from schools around the state hauled their tabletop model cities to the university's ballroom for judging, said Carol Dostal, the competition's outreach director.

Students, who began designing the cities in September, were challenged to tackle big issues like pollution, unemployment, education, security and crime without sending their cities' budgets into the red.

The entries included Pendleton Heights' Sawdust City, which its "history" claims was built on the ruins of Washington, D.C., after the U.S. was "obliterated" by a nuclear attack from Canada.

Another model, created by a team from Leo Junior-Senior High School, was the futuristic German city "Stadt des Segei."

Leo eighth-grader Kristopher Burris said the name means "city of the sails," chosen because the city uses water to export its main resource – pyritium – a mineral as imaginary as the model city.

"It just completely defines our city," Burris said about the mineral.

Burris said other city features include a casino, skyways and a combined water and air filtration plant that uses nanotechnology to gather pollution from the air and transport it to the plant where the contaminants are removed.

The city also boasts a McDonald's that offers tasty, fat-free food, thanks to a miracle ingredient.

The seven-member team spent three days a week for four months to craft the city, an experience Burris said allowed him to combine his artistic flair with his competitive spirit.

After a morning of judging, the top six competitors advanced to the second round of the design contest before an audience that gathered in the ballroom.

Stadt des Segei was among the six cities judges reviewed. The team came in second.

Dostal said the competition's top prize winner, Blackhawk Middle School, will advance to February's national competition in Washington, D.C.



Laura J. Gardner | The Journal Gazette

"Apollo" design team members, from left, Tyler Haber Dan Hopkins, Morgan Ryan and Addison Ulmer of Leo Junior-Senior High School listen as judges in the IPFW Walb Student Union Ballroom look over the future cities.

Top schools

The following middle school teams won awards at the Indiana Regional Future City Competition

1. Blackhawk Middle School, Fort Wayne, designed Tre'picole' Dinana
2. Leo Junior-Senior High School, Leo-Cedarville, designed Stadt des Segei
3. Bremen Middle School, Bremen, designed Mountainside
4. Canterbury School, Fort Wayne, designed Aquapolis
5. Ellis Home School, Fort Wayne, designed Village Verde
6. Riverview, Huntington, designed Bomlimpovila